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IDENTICAL LETTERS DATED 12 OCTOBER 1999 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF INDONESIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL AND TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Indonesia strongly deplores the incident that took place in Mato Ain, a village close to the border of East Timor, Regency of Kabupaten Belu, province of East Nusa Tenggara (West Timor).

The chronology of facts concerning the aforementioned incident is the following:

1. On Sunday, 10 October 1999, at 12.30 p.m., the military and police personnel in the Mato Ain station, upon hearing the sounds of armoured vehicles approaching, in accordance with standard procedures, stood ready on alert in anticipation of the situation. What occurred, thereafter, was that one of the personnel fired warning shots in the air to alert the other personnel to get ready. The sound of the shots, however, was interpreted by INTERFET to be directed against them and hence they opened fire against the Indonesian side. The ensuing exchange of shots caused the following casualties:

- One policeman, namely, Private Second Class Hari Sudibyo was killed;
- One policeman, namely, First Sergeant Agus Sudarto was severely wounded;
- One policeman, namely, First Sergeant Agus Susanto, and one civilian (name unknown) sustained minor injuries.

2. The exchange of fire ceased after the Commander of INTERFET, Major Mark Kelly and the Commander of platoon YONIF 743 (infantry battalion), Second Lieutenant Erwin, ordered their personnel to stop their actions immediately.

3. At 2 p.m., the District Commander of Atambua, Lieutenant Colonel Sigit, arrived at the location of the incident to meet with Major Mark Kelly, who was accompanied by Major Brian, the interpreter.

The summary of their discussions is as follows:

- INTERFET stated earlier that they were still in East Timor territory to pursue two individuals suspected of being members of the militia.

- The District Commander conveyed to his counterpart that, according to the map and the stone boulders separating East Timor from East Nusa Tenggara (West Timor), INTERFET had trespassed into the province of East Nusa Tenggara.

- Based on the above explanations given by the District Commander, Major Kelly acknowledged the error and apologized while he withdrew his personnel.

These facts clearly show that the incident took place within the national territory of Indonesia and not in East Timor. Even if this was a result of an accident because of a difference in maps, it is baffling how INTERFET that supposedly possesses sophisticated equipment could make such a miscalculation. Indonesia, therefore, demands that necessary disciplinary action be taken against those responsible for this incident and that further measures be initiated by the INTERFET Commander to prevent the recurrence of such incidents in the future.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Makarim WIBISONO
Ambassador
Permanent Representative